



Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN)  
Ravensong Swimming Pool Services Amendment  
By Law 899.02, 2022

&

Area E Resident Counter-Proposal

January 23rd, 2023 (TBC)

DRAFT V 2.0

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# The Focus of Our Discussions

TOPIC	<b>Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) Ravensong Swimming Pool Services Amendment - By Law 899.02, 2022</b>
ISSUE AT HAND	<b>Area E Residents are facing forced participation in an ‘inequitable funding arrangement’, as currently proposed by the RDN.</b>
A Potential Solution	<b>Area E Residents, in the spirit of equitability &amp; inclusion, offer a counter-proposal and a clear request of the Inspector of Municipalities.</b>

- The decision making process excluded Area E Residents’ voice and true opinions.
- The fragmented information provided lacked the necessary clarity and transparency needed to support thoughtful discussion and true engagement.
- A poor engagement approach created a closed process that did not allow Area E Residents to truly be heard or be involved in the decision making.
- The RDN’s funding proposal failed to take into consideration the ‘geographic Use’ of Area E residents and the ‘associated cost implication’ equitably.

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# History

## **Original By-Law (1993) - Why Nanoose Bay Was Not Included**

- Once it became known the pool would not be built closer to Nanoose and instead would be built in Qualicum Beach, Nanoose Bay residents were surveyed. 70% of households responded, with 90% saying 'NO' to being included in the funding of the pool.
- The rationale for exclusion were (1) Low expected use given distance and (2) the availability of private facilities in Pacific Shores & Fairwinds.
- The RDN Board and Rec Committee agreed and it was decided by all parties, that anyone from Nanoose Bay using the facility would pay a 20% surcharge. At a later date, the RDN abandoned the surcharge likely given low usage rates.

## **RDN Position on Inclusion:**

- When asked for the rationale for the original exclusion of Area E, the RDN said that there were no details available for the original agreement.
- When asked "Why Include Area E Now?", the lack of a surcharge and no taxation were given. An odd response given their earlier removal of the surcharge at their own discretion.

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# Greater Budget Detail is required for Residents to understand what they are being asked to support.

## 1) The Proposed Budget

- Materials provided spoke to a 2022 Budget of \$3,085,082 with few details.

### RDN Communication:

- It was not clear what the budget number included as very few details were given.
- After multiple inquiries, it was disclosed that the Budget includes a significant Capital Reserve for a proposed \$31.5 million dollar pool expansion. Future budget expectations were also not provided until specifically requested as we continued to seek clarity.

### Our Understanding Now:

Long-term Capital Reserve	\$ 1,500,000
Operating Budget	<u>\$ 1,585,082</u>
Total	\$ 3,085,082

Note: \$1.5 million per year can likely service the loan for the 31.5 million dollar expansion. Has the funding for the expansion been built in?

### Budget Outlook

2022	\$3,085,082	
2023	\$3,392,590	9.96% Increase
2024	\$4,072,380	19.97% Increase
2025	\$4,337,008	6.5% Increase
2026	\$4,423,748	2.0% Increase

A surprising 43.4% Increase over 4 years

# Without clear and complete usage data 'equitable geographic usage' and 'cost implications' cannot be assessed

## 2) Usage Information

- Area E usage was represented at 4.6%.

### RDN Communication:

- Usage Survey details were requested for both 2010 and 2015. The RDN advised us that the 2015 information is not in report form and therefore is unavailable at this time and only provided 2016 total usage.
- This data is essential to assess the 'Equitable Geographic Usage and Cost Implications'.

### Our Understanding Now:

The 4.6% Area E usage number is an average of 2010 and 2015.

Area E's Usage is low and in decline

2010	5.2
2015	3.9 (-18%)

### 2015 Usage Numbers

Parksville	24.2%
Qualicum	21.8%
Area E	3.9%
Area F	19.6%
Area G	18.7%
Area H	6.3%

Note: The remaining 5.5% of usage comes from outside.

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# The Taxation Formula is not equitable between proposed participating communities

## 3) Proposed Taxation Formula

- The RDN is proposing a formula that has cost shared based on 1/3 population, 1/3 property assessment value, 1/3 usage. Under this formula Area E would cover 11.8% of the costs or \$364,822 based on the 2022 budget and an average of 2010/2015 usage rates. This would grow to \$522,002 by 2026.

### RDN Communications:

- There did not seem to be awareness of the inherent 'Inequity' this formula creates.

### Our Understanding Now:

Area E's usage is only 4.6% (Avg. 2010, 2015) yet residents are being asked to covers 11.8% of the total cost, inclusive of the \$31.5 million proposed expansion. Based on usage alone we would pay \$141,913. The RDN formula has Area E pay \$364,822. This is over 2.5 times fair usage. Based on 2015 usage rates we would pay 127,320.

### Other Pools on Vancouver Island

It is our understanding that the pools in both Nanaimo and in North Cowichan allocate cost based on usage alone.

In our opinion a 'usage only formula' is fair and equitable as it represents a population's true engagement and the associated costs of using and maintaining such a facility.

# The Taxation Formula is not equitable between proposed participating communities

	# of Private Residences	%	Pop.	%	Avg. Res. Value	% Total Value	% Usage 2015	RDN Proposed Formula (1/3,1/3,1/3)	%	2015 Usage Only Formula	%	Difference
Parksville	7105	28	13642	27.1	\$669,603	22.6	24.2	\$802,519	26.1	\$790043	25.7	-12,476
Qualicum	4763	18.8	9303	18.5	\$877,310	19.9	21.8	\$656,445	21.2	\$711691	23.1	+55,246
Area E	3342	13.2	6765	13.4	\$1,133,873	18.0	3.9	\$364,822	11.8	\$127,320	4.1	-237,503
Area F	3877	15.3	8216	16.3	\$693,016	12.8	19.6	\$485,055	15.7	\$639,869	20.7	+154,814
Area G	3779	14.9	8109	16.1	\$942,810	17.0	18.7	\$517,427	16.7	\$610,487	19.7	+93,060
Area H	2524	9.9	4291	8.5	\$807,643	10.0	6.3	\$254,814	8.3	\$205,672	6.7	-49,142
Total	25390		50326				94.5	\$3,081,082		\$3,085,082	100	

Note:\$4000  
unaccounted for

Note: Usage  
Number  
Index to  
cover 5.5%  
use from  
outside the  
participating  
areas.

- The Inequity for Area E is dramatic. Under the RDN proposed formula Area E will pay 2.9 times the dollars that the residents actual usage would dictate.
- Effectively Area E will be significantly subsidizing Qualicum, Coombs, French Creek and Bowsers usage.

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# The Decision Making Process has been less than clear and in effect is an Undemocratic Mandate that robs Area E Residence of True Representation.

## Decision Making - Our Understanding:

In the case of adding a participating area to the service, the RDN may amend the service establishing bylaw in the following two ways:

- 1) With at least 2/3rds of the participants, including any proposed new participant, and Inspector of the Municipalities' approval. OR,
- 2) In accordance with the requirements applicable to the adoption of the bylaw that it amends (such as a referendum or alternative approval process), and Inspector of the Municipalities' approval.

We are aware that the RDN has previously attempted to gain approval to the amendment from the Ministry without any consultation with Area E residents.

## RDN Response

Yes, that is correct.

**Our Participation is being Mandated!**

**Actual Geographic Usage & Residents Voices are being Set Aside**

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# The Community Engagement Process in Area E Was Poor!

## Process Shortcomings:

### Community Meetings

- Overall, there was not enough information & clarity to help people understand both the budget cost implications and the taxations formula.
- Further, it was unclear what, if any, choice people were being asked to consider.
- The format was show and tell only and delivered one on one vs full presentation.
- No open discussion or feedback opportunity were provided.

### Survey

- The survey was difficult to use and lacked the information and clarity to truly understand the costs and the taxation formula.
- Limited opportunity for open feedback.
- The system was unavailable at times.

### Lack of a Referendum regarding Participation for Area E residents

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## Our Counter Proposal & Requests

1. We request a Referendum regarding Participation for Area E residents alone.  
(Give us our voice)
2. We ask the Inspector of Municipalities to only support amendments to By-law 899.02 that reflects equitability and for the purposes of the Pool Service, based on Usage Alone.
3. In the spirit of Equitability & Inclusion, both the Northwest Nanoose Residence Association (NNRA) and Fairwinds Community Association (FRA) would recommend to our members participate in funding pool services, provided the taxation formula is based on Resident Usage alone. This provides for true equitability, fully recognizing the true geographic usage. (A equitable solution that does not have Area E subsidize other areas and pay over 2.5 times our fair share.
4. During this time of rapidly expanding taxation, driven largely by regional health care needs, we strongly suggest we as a region prioritize projects based on need and affordability and begin to build and use the capacity to say 'No' to projects. Accordingly, we would deprioritize the expansion of Ravensong and say 'No' to the project.